Appendix table 7-13.
Results of Attitude Toward Organized Science Scale: 1983–2001

Items and characteristics	1983	1985	1988	1990	1992	1995	1997	1999	2001
				Percent					
Agree that "science and technology are making our lives healthier, easier, and more comfortable."	84	86	87	84	85	86	89	90	86
Agree that "the benefits of science are greater than any harmful effects."	57	68	76	72	73	72	75	75	72
Disagree that "science makes our way of life change too fast."	50	53	59	60	63	60	61	57	59
Disagree that "we depend too much on science and not enough on faith."	43	39	43	44	45	44	48	46	45
				Mean ATOSS score					
All adults	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6
Male	2.2	2.4	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.8	2.7
Female	2.5	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.5
Formal education									
Less than high school	1.8	1.8	2.2	1.8	2.0	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.1
High school graduate	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6
Baccalaureate	2.9	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.0
Graduate/professional	2.9	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.2
Science/mathematics education[a]									
Low	NA	NA	NA	2.4	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.4	2.4
Middle	NA	NA	NA	2.9	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.8
High	NA	NA	NA	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.3	3.1
Attentiveness to science or technology[b]									
Attentive public	2.6	2.8	3.0	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9
Interested public	2.4	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.8	2.7
Residual public	2.1	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
Sample size (number)	1,631	2,005	2,041	2,033	3,977	2,006	2,000	1,882	1,574

ATOSS = Attitude Toward Organized Science Scale; NA = not available

[a]Respondents were classified as having a "high" level of science/mathematics education if they took nine or more high school and college science/math courses. They were classified as "middle" if they took six to eight such courses and "low" if they took five or fewer.

[b]To be classified as attentive to a given policy area, an individual must indicate that he or she is "very interested" in that issue area, report that he or she is "very well informed" about it, and be a regular reader of a daily newspaper or relevant national magazine. Citizens who report that they are "very interested" in an issue area but do not think that they are "very well informed" about it are classified as the "interested public." All other individuals are classified as members of the "residual public" for that issue area. The attentive public for science and technology combines the attentive public for new scientific discoveries and the attentive public for new inventions and technologies. Any individual who is not attentive to either of those issues but who is a member of the interested public for at least one of those issues is classified as a member of the interested public for science and technology. All other individuals are classified as members of the residual public for science and technology.

NOTES: Responses are to the following statement: "Now I would like to read you some statements like those you might find in a newspaper or magazine article. For each statement, please tell me if you generally agree or disagree. If you feel especially strongly about a statement, please tell me that you strongly agree or strongly disagree." The scale is a count of agreement with the first two items and disagreement with the last two items. ATOSS scores for each respondent range from 0 to 4, with a score of 4 representing agreement with the first two items and disagreement with the last two, and a score of 0 representing disagreement with the first two items and agreement with the last two.

SOURCE: National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Statistics (NSF/SRS), NSF Survey of Public Attitudes Toward and Understanding of Science and Technology, various years.